UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA Academic Senate

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND BUDGET

Minutes of Meeting
5 May 2026

In attendance: Robert Brosnan (Chair), Alyssa Brewer (Vice Chair), Pheng Cheah (Berkeley), Rene Zieve (Davis), Maria Pantelia (Irvine), Richard Desjardins (Los Angeles), Michael Beman (Merced), David Ogelsby (Riverside), Oliver Schmidt (San Diego), Jenny Liu (San Francisco), Barry Giesbrecht (Santa Barbara), Jeremy Hourigan (alternate, Santa Cruz), Sarah Bacon (Graduate Student Representative), Caín Diaz (Associate Vice President, Budget Analysis and Planning), Seija Virtanen (Director, State Governmental Relations), Stefani Leto (Analyst)

I. Consent Calendar; Chair's Announcements

Action: UCPB approved the May 5 agenda and the April 7, 2026 minutes

Chair Brosnan reminded the committee of three remaining projects for the year: a report on comparative athletics funding on each campus, a letter reporting on costs for English and Chemistry graduate students on each campus, and a response to the Report of the Yale Committee on Trust in Higher Education.

The committee extended thanks to incoming Chair Alyssa Brewer and Vice Chair David Ogelsby.

II. Discussion: Athletics Funding

The committee discussed that the Equity Athletics web page does not accurately reflect campus athletics costs as it counts core funding, used to support or fill deficits, as revenue, with no acknowledgement that those funds are then unavailable for other university priorities. The committee's table shows the deficits and how much core funding goes to athletics on each campus reporting. Most campuses do not also report facilities or other indirect costs, indicating that deficits are likely higher than UCPB found. A letter from the committee noting their findings as well as the importance of central tracking spending on athletics at each campus will first go to UCPB and then CFO Brostrom for feedback.

III. Discussion: Graduate Student Costs and Funding Sources

UCPB is preparing a report on graduate student funding, using English and Chemistry graduate students as demonstration cases, in response to a request by Council Vice Chair Scott. UCPB will, in the letter and table summarizing their findings, create a basic summary with mean and range costs shown, as well as funding sources, total funding costs, and time to degree.

This short report is an opportunity to address extreme edge cases. It will serve as a call for more routine monitoring by OP of the state of graduate funding. The committee notes that that this is first pass data on only two disciplines and that additional reports from a wider variety of disciplines will provide a more comprehensive view. In addition, the committee assumed variance in campus calculations of these costs, and notes that a more thorough and standardized response should be part of routine reports to OP.

Should future reports be requested, they should include granularity for agency funding sources. This would provide insight into challenges by field depending on which funding agencies come under political or budget pressure.

Members noted that some graduate students are hired as staff Assistant Instructors and other titles and noted that a list of job titles that students are hired under would increase the report's accuracy. However, this is a time-limited report, and UCPB hopes that deeper investigation will follow.

Members discussed potential ways to reduce the costs of ever-more expensive TAs and GSRs by using AI to do some sorts of grading and tutoring, hiring undergraduate Learning Assistants, freeing TAs up to teach directly, and using asynchronous videos. Reducing costs would be a way to limit pressure to reduce absolute numbers of graduate students.

A draft of the report will go to UCPB for review and subsequently to Vice Chair Scott and Chair Palazoglu and Vice President Diaz.

IV. Berkeley Concurrent Enrollment Information Request

UC Berkeley has changed its policy on revenue allocation for concurrent enrollment, when a student who is not an admitted UC student takes a UC class. This can include students from other colleges and universities, extension students, and high school students. Revenue is split between the teaching department, central campus for administration, and the unit covering study abroad, extension, and lifelong learning, and the percentages will be shifted away from the teaching department. A UCPB member asked for information from other campuses about how that revenue is split.

Once the language for the request is formalized, a template for the request will be shared with committee members, and results will be shared with all following.

V. Simple Name Change School of Computing, Information, and Data Sciences, UC San Diego

UCPB members discussed the proposed name change of the School of Computing, Information, and Data Sciences at UC San Diego.

Action: The committee voted unanimously to approve the name change

VI. Consultation with OP

Seija Virtanen, Associate Director, State Governmental Relations, and Cain Diaz, Associate Vice President, Budget Analysis and Planning, spoke with UCPB about the state budget and planning for the 2026-27 UC budget.

The governor's May revision of the budget is not yet released but will consider state revenues through June. The revision will likely maintain the same amounts for the UC as in the January version of the budget. State revenues are higher than anticipated. However, the state anticipates longer-term deficits, and the legislature and governor are leery of taking on additional ongoing funding. State revenues are unlikely exceed the Gann limit by any appreciable amount, and any overage would likely go to K-14 school funding. The UC is pushing for a one-time backfill payment for deferred compact funding in the 26-27 budget year rather than later as the legislature had hoped.

Participants from across the system went to Sacramento for UC Day, a day to showcase the best things about the UC and underscore its positive impact on the state. The chair of the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) testified about standardizing course names across higher education segments. Legislators had threatened to withhold $25M from the UC as a penalty for slowing down the naming effort.

Because the legislature offered the CSU one-time funding to support enrollment, they will offer the UC the same amount, and the university has submitted a list. Some of the hesitancy on the legislator's part toward increasing UC one-time funds is a result of concerns that federal cuts to Medicaid will gravely impact health care in the state.

Another area of discussion for the legislature is that by funding graduate students at the UC, they would be supporting labor, labor that is increasingly pricing graduate students out of professors' and departments' budgets.

AVP Diaz reported that a summary report on non-resident funding at the UC was submitted to the legislature, in response to questions about the non-resident funding swap. One calculation was how much nonresident tuition would have to increase to allow the UC to self-fund the gap. Because of the tuition stability plan, an increase would only apply to new cohorts of students, and the increase would equal the total cost of attendance at the universities of Virginia and Michigan, and with fees, equal to Princeton and Yale. The committee discussed charging a surcharge for the three UC campuses most affected by the nonresident cap. One effect would be to make the UC only available for wealthy out of state students, and the UC's mission as a public university precludes that as a viable alternative. Nonresident students were getting a relative bargain at the UC, so the budget office is examining raising tuition for them.

However, using out of state students to pay for gaps created by state policies would release the state from its obligation to fund the gap it created with the nonresident cap. Funding enrollment growth is a state obligation. State governmental relations and the budget office will maintain messages to the legislature about how nonresident tuition funds California students.

UCPB will discuss the upcoming UC budget process over the next two months, and be involved in budget planning with multiple check ins with the Budget Management Office.

VII. Self-Supporting Professional Graduate Program Proposal Review

1. UCLA Master of Population Data Science

   UCPB agreed that the program presented a well-written proposal and the plan minimizes financial risk through a backstop arrangement with the Dean of Social Sciences. The committee noted a plan to rely heavily on international students and would caution the campus to review international student application rates to ensure That those metrics be met as easily as they could in the past.

2. UC Berkeley Master of Instructional Design (MInD) - will have to assign via email

   Action: UCPB agreed to send a review letter to CCGA

VIII. Committee Representative Reports

a. Health Care Task Force (HCTF) reported on four issues:

   i. HCTF is discussing Health Insurance Premium Changes for 2026-27 and anticipating roughly 9.5% rate increases likely to be across the board. Members are not fully certain of the cost drivers, although there has been some intimation that it's pharmacologically driven. Dr Rubin wants to focus on equity between covered and non-covered employees, as disparate health care costs are an important driver of unionization across the UC.

   ii. Systemwide HR has released some recommendations from the Benefits Survey including a review of Delta Dental. They concluded that geography affects otherwise standard access metrics and will require Delta to follow up with providers leaving network and make efforts to win them back. Increased access to mental health providers will come from digital options, and discussions about collaborating with UC Health to prioritize access to UC providers for plan members now that PPO enrollment has increased. A reevaluation of premium pay bands to prevent large jumps for relatively modest salary increases. A hazard of this within pay band smoothing is to increase employees choosing more expensive options, increasing UC subsidies for health care.

   iii. The last issue considered by the HCTF is whether UC senate faculty should argue for a similar deal to the CNA group, who have negotiated favorable healthcare and benefits deal with limits on increases to healthcare plan costs.

b. The Task Force on Investments and Retirement (TFIR) discussed the benefits survey. The Regents discussed that funds directly managed by the CIO's office produced lower returns than passively managed index funds. The fully-funded percentage of the pension differs depending on the source of the information, but the administration appears to want faculty to pay a larger part of the pension funding.

a. The Academic Council Special Committee on Lab Issues (ACSOLI) discussed principles for a new lab fees program. The Vice President for the National Labs advocates that lab fee proceeds should benefit the labs. Special Committee members advocate that the labs need to also think of the overall mission of the UC. Many researchers at the labs are not aware of graduate student numbers are shrinking. ACSCOLI feels a responsibility to inform them.

b. University Committee on Education Abroad Program (UCEAP) had no report

IX. Campus Updates

Davis: The first Presidential Post Doctoral Fellowship (PPFP) Target of Excellence (TOE) waivers went through. This is a new deployment of TOE waivers for Davis. Some faculty pushed back on the idea that a new faculty member could meet the criteria for excellence. The campus paid $800k for an estimate for a renovation for a fairly new building. State law mandates a cost level at which projects have to be opened for bidding, but that level has not been adjusted for inflation. Campuses cannot do many projects in-house because of the artificially low threshold.

Irvine: The Provost agreed last year to require all schools to provide an executive summary of their budget requests. The CPB is reviewing those. Central campus shows no deficit; it is all shown in school budgets. The campus is discussing various practices, including reorienting the funds generated by successful schools to less successful, but are also discussing disincentives that might create. The Development Office is discussing possible revenue generation.

Los Angeles: The campus deficit is now reduced to $220M. Budget information is flowing to the Senate more freely, and CPB has done an updated report on campus financing. This report notes that in addition to the structural deficit, there are two units with major shortfalls: IT and athletics. The Chancellor has a plan to shore up athletics funding but has not made it public. The level of overall deficit seems to be accelerating. Senate leadership has negotiated a protocol with the EVCPs about information sharing involving CPB so drafts stay confidential and now CPB will be involved in analyzing the campus budget as it is developed. The outgoing and incoming CPB chairs will participate in a budget conference at changeover in September. The campus senate wants a plan to address high-loss units before faculty buy in is sought on a salary discussion. Staff and faculty retirements will be used to address the deficit as they are the only way to downsize. CPB has some concerns that the campus will lose money on the Olympics.

Merced: The campus has an upcoming Joint senate-admin committee meeting on budget reduction. Without new revenue, layoffs are the only budget path forward. Housing makes money and floats a lot of campus debt. CPB now has a better picture of the budget situation and can advocate more effectively. The Chancellor is pushing back against faculty concerns that there is not enough is spent on instruction. Merced appears to have a slight uptick in enrollment next year.

Riverside: The campus has a new CFO/VC of Facilities Administration. Even though budget review meetings are taking place, no changes will happen before the new CFO comes. The campus is trying to optimize student-faculty ratios. Institutional Research can have different numbers for the same unit, underscoring how carefully comparisons need to be made. Because of prior hiring practices for GSRs, the campus may be overexposed to increased graduate labor costs.

San Diego: The senate is now getting detailed information from purchasing to personnel information. The senate is trying to establish budget and planning retreats that include many decision makers. The campus has just purchased HelioCampus and looks forward to its deployment.

San Francisco: The administration has presented the campus financial picture as bleak and in need of increased productivity, mostly through the deployment of AI. Reduction of both staff and administration will be needed to cut costs. CPB is starting a real dialogue with the Chancellor's office and hopes for better consultation. The budget committee has increased member's service to two years to help with continuity.

Santa Barbara: The campus continues to address a structural deficit and hired 60 people despite the hiring freeze. A new joint administration revenue generation working group focuses on auxiliary services (housing, athletics, parking) to address short term revenue impact. There is some resistance on campus to the idea of revenue sharing to shore up deficit units. CPB is writing a memo to change how design/construction are charged. Campus recharge rates are lower than the UC average.

Santa Cruz: A new EVC will start in January. The campus has had three high level departures and is performing lots of personnel searches. The budget committee is concerned full budgetary authority was transferred to the CFO. The senate is concerned that shared governance over budget issues will be more difficult to achieve. Attrition and retirement are being used to address the budget crisis. A SWOT analysis of looming retirements will show affected disciplines. An undergraduate program with 550 students will close because there is not enough staff to support them. Language programs are pushed hard and smaller ones are suffering. There are likely to be 10-15 percent cuts to department sizes. Physical plant costs also going up and proving difficult to reduce or address.

X. Discussion of the Yale Report

UCPB discussed the Report of the Committee on Trust in Higher Education, the "Yale Report." Chair Brosnan proposed submitting written comments to Chair Palazoglu after the July UCPB meeting.

Committee members noted that some of the report did not generalize well from a small private school like Yale to a large public university system, especially one like the UC with its explicit mission to serve as a social mobility engine. Additionally, shared governance does not play a large part of the report and may not be important to Yale in the way that it is at the UC. Members suggested highlighting the ways shared governance strengthens the UC and helps it fulfill its tripartite mission. Solutions to problems may prove slippery, such as addressing grade inflation in a system that uses student evaluations in faculty advancement. Creative solutions such as peer evaluation of teaching may be needed in this attempt. Departments seen as unsupportive to students may lose enrollment if they address rampant grade inflation. If grades alone or test scores are used to determine admission to higher education, it would affect the UC pool, with its very high numbers of first generation students. Holistic review allows for the evaluation of a students' academic achievement in the context of their lives, which may vary tremendously in terms of opportunities.

The committee adjourned at 3:59.

Minutes prepared by Stefani Leto, Analyst
Attest: Robert Brosnan, UCPB Chair